

I cannot attend the meeting on Jan 31st but I would like to submit the following to eliminate the loophole in the law that should protect the MDC. I am an avid mountain bike rider and I frequently ride the West Hartford reservoir. Please use this e-mail in lieu of my public testimony to return liability protection to these municipalities.

Regards,

Jim Brick

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The existing Statute (Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 52-557f et seq.) provides strong liability protection for private landowners and private corporations such as utilities, and it includes liability protection for municipalities that was supposed to be equally strong when it was passed in 1971. However, court interpretations of the statute -- in cases such as Conway v. Wilton and the May, 2010 jury award of \$2.9 million to a mountain biker injured at the MDC Reservoir in West Hartford -- have made it clear that the statutory immunity against liability for municipalities is not strong enough.

Fixing the Recreational Liability Statute is critical to protect and encourage municipal landowners:

- 1) To promote public health through increasing outdoor recreation opportunities in Connecticut, and*
- 2) To keep open properties such as those around the MDC West Hartford Reservoir for non-motorized recreational activities*